

WEALD OF KENT HEALTH AREA.

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1941

PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

by

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

A. W. GAYE, B.A., M.B., B.C., D.P.H. (Cantab.)



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WEALD OF KENT HEALTH AREA.To the WEALD OF KENT HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have pleasure in presenting the second Annual Report for the Weald of Kent Health Area.

The Statutory Health Committee for the year was constituted as follows:-

Chairman.

E. E. SELMES, Esq., J.P. - Tenterden Rural District.

Tenterden Borough.

Mrs. Adams.

Dr. T. Martin.

Cranbrook Rural District.

A. B. Burney, Esq.,

Mrs. Clayton-Jones,

Miss A. D. Hindle.

Maidstone Rural District.

W. Day, Esq.,

J. B. Leaver, Esq.,

J. A. Raynham, Esq.,

Tenterden Rural District.

C. H. Brown, Esq.

Clerk - P. G. Banfield, Esq., with offices at 5, East Hill,
Tenterden.

This is the first complete year for which I have been responsible. The population of the area has decreased by 6,498 to 44,759 - due to the decrease in the number of evacuees and increased calls upon the adult population for service elsewhere.

Shortage of houses continues to be an acute problem in all districts, and overcrowding remains in spite of the decrease in the number of evacuees.

The quality of the milk supplies is still not all it should be and it is difficult to stimulate the producers to improve it with their lack of labour and the unfortunate decrease in supervision.

There was much more infectious disease (mainly measles) but fortunately not much among hop-pickers.

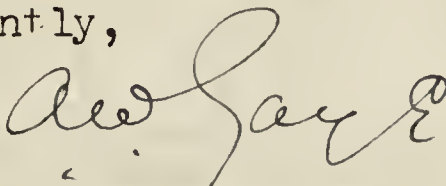
A notable feature of the year was the campaign for anti-diphtheria immunisation. The Scheme was arranged to give inoculation free for children of the ages one to fifteen. The inoculations, which were done by local practitioners, were mostly performed in sessions at the schools. The local authorities paid the practitioners and the Ministry provided the Alum precipitated toxoid of which two doses were given (0.1cc and 0.3cc in all districts except one) with an interval of a month between. Details of the response obtained is given in the body of the Report. It will be seen that the response among school children was satisfactory, but that among under fives disappointing.

The statistical tables at the end of the Report give only a partial idea of the work put in by the Sanitary Inspectors, and I wish to put on record my appreciation of the unstinted help rendered by them consistently during the year.

This Report is of necessity brief, but further comment and figures can be made available if called for.

I am, Sirs,

Yours obediently,



"Yellowbois",
Cranbrook,
Kent.

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS.

	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
<u>AREA</u> (Acres)	8,946	41,315	34,708	38,379
<u>POPULATION</u>				
(a) Resident (census 1931)	3,472	12,927	15,317	6,315
(b) Resident (Mid year 1941)	3,929	15,740	18,360	6,730
(c) Average appropriate to calculation of Death Rate.	3,952	15,881	18,512	6,751
<u>RATEABLE VALUE</u>	£23,632	£76,717	£90,578	£27,511
Sum represented by a ld rate	£97	£310	£380,16s.	£113.5.8d.
<u>NUMBER of INHABITED HOUSES</u> (end of 1941) according to Rate book.	1,108	4,091	5,100	2,105
<u>VITAL STATISTICS:-</u>				
<u>Live Births.</u>				
Legitimate (Male	29	102	127	36
(Female	24	84	130	40
(Total	53	186	257	76
Illegitimate Total	4	10	11	2
<u>Birth Rate</u> (per 1000 esti- mated population mid 1941)	14.50	12.45	14.59	11.58
<u>Still Births</u>				
Legitimate (Male	-	7	3	-
(Female	-	5	3	1
(Total	-	12	6	1
Illegitimate	None	None	None	None
<u>Still Birth Rate</u> per 1,000 live & still births)	-	57.69	21.89	12.65
<u>Deaths</u>				
Male	24	96	112	55
Female	25	83	116	66
Total	49	179	228	121
<u>Death Rate</u> (per 1,000 estimated population)	12.40.	11.27.	12.31.	17.92.
Deaths from Puerperal Causes	None	None	None	None
<u>Death Rate of Infants.</u>				
All infants per 1,000 live births.	16.94.	53.65.	46.42.	23.25.
<u>Total Infant</u>				
<u>Deaths</u> Male	-	2	10	1
Female	1	2	3	1
Total	1	11	13	
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	8	31	32	10
" " Measles "	None	None	None	None
" " Whooping Cough "	None		None	None
" " diarrhoea (under 2 years)	None		None	None.

Continued -

For this year, the Registrar General was unable to give comparability factor figures, so that the death rates shown above should be compared with:- 14.01 9.38 12.15 12.46 for 1940, which shows a decrease in Tenterden Borough and an increase in Cranbrook and Tenterden Rural Districts. In the latter case there is an actual increase of deaths by 30% with at the same time a decrease in the estimated population. The other three districts show also a decline in population, the main cause being efflux of evacuees.

The birth rate, compared with that of 1940, shows a definite increase in the Cranbrook and Maidstone Rural Districts, and 25% decrease in the Tenterden Rural District. With the exception of the latter, the figures for 1941 are very similar to those for 1939.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Tenterden Borough) There has been no addition to the supplies
Cranbrook R.D.) in these three districts.
Maidstone R.D.)
Cranbrook R.D. - replacement of corroded iron by 6" asbestos piping was commenced in November 1941, between Wilsley Pound and Biddenden.

Tenterden R.D. The inter-connecting 3" main between Mid Kent and Wittersham supplies was completed during the year and put into service in September 1941. This now relieves the strain put on the Wittersham supply owing to additional needs.

Of twenty two samples from the Rural District Water Undertaking, two were found unsatisfactory. One (untreated) was from the collecting chamber, but the water was satisfactory after chlorination; the other (treated) was from a tap on the main and was due to local contamination.

In all four districts, sampling by the companies and by the Sanitary Inspectors was continued as a routine measure and the results of the examinations were satisfactory. In addition, other water supplies have been investigated, lists of good and bad waters drawn up and preparations made for chlorination. These will be used as emergency supplies in the event of the normal supplies being cut off by enemy action.

DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Tenterden R.D. The Council have sewerage works at Wittersham, Rolvenden, High Halden, Woodchurch and Appledore. A satisfactory effluent was maintained at the first two, but this cannot be said of the others. Numerous complaints were received as to the condition of the roadside ditches into which the drainage from private houses was discharging.

HOUSING

Tenterden Borough. There is a general shortage of houses and applications for council houses are continually being received.

Cranbrook R.D. There is a general shortage of houses partly due to evacuees. Difficulty is experienced in enforcing repairs owing to lack of labour and materials.

Maidstone R.D. A great number of houses are overcrowded owing to War conditions.

Tenterden R.D. Housing conditions generally are satisfactory. The operation of the Housing Acts being suspended, inspections are only made when complaints are received.

MILK SUPPLIES

Owing to the large amount of time spent on additional duties directly, or indirectly, connected with the War, and the lack of petrol, it has become increasingly difficult for the Inspectors to carry out as much supervision of the production and handling of milk as is desirable. Large numbers of samples were taken, and quite a percentage of these were found unsatisfactory on examination. In most cases, the farmers explain these poor results as due to lack of labour and female labour which has to be newly instructed. When machinery goes wrong, it is often some considerable time before a replacement can be obtained.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

Cranbrook R.D. During the year, the meat for the district continued to be slaughtered at the Ministry of Food slaughter-house, Cranbrook.

Maidstone R.D. It is to be noted that satisfactory improvement in the condition of Government meat supplies due to its more careful handling and distribution, as the result of the Sanitary Inspectors calling attention to the unsound methods used formerly.

NURSING HOMES.

	Number Registered	Maternity Beds.	Other Beds
Tenterden Borough	1	12	28
Cranbrook R.D.	7*	14	55
Maidstone R.D.	2	7	27
Total	10	33	110

* This figure includes two new Homes registered during the year.

The Nursing Homes are visited by the Medical Officer of Health and twelve inspections were made in the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.Notifications:-

	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.	Totals
Diphtheria.	4	11	7	3	25
Scarlet Fever.	1	18	7	7	33
Pneumonia.	1	23	6	9	39
Cerebro-spinal Fever	-	1	2	-	3
Erysipelas.	1	4	1	-	6
Anterior-poliomyelitis	-	-	-	1	1
Paratyphoid "B"	-	-	5	-	5
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	3	-	3
Anthrax	-	-	1	-	1
Measles.	12	37	199	8	256
Whooping Cough	41	60	78	33	212
	60	154	309	61	584

INFECTIOUS DISEASE - continued.

There was a considerable increase in cases of notifiable infectious disease - total 584 as against 170 in 1940. The increase was due to epidemics of measles (mainly in the Cranbrook and Maidstone Rural districts) and of whooping cough (in all four districts.) There was a slight decrease in the notifications of scarlet fever (33 against 41), while those of diphtheria and pneumonia remained much as before. There was a small outbreak of diphtheria at Baby's Castle, Hawkhurst involving staff and inmates. Two cases of diphtheria in the Tenterden Rural district and one in Tenterden Borough were fatal. The latter was the case of a man sent home from service in the Army. The Klebs-Loeffler bacillus was found in his sputum. Three of the cases of diphtheria occurred in hop-pickers encampments in the Maidstone Rural District and there were a few cases of measles and whooping cough in encampments both in the Cranbrook and Maidstone Rural districts.

One fatal case of anthrax pustule in a farm worker occurred due to handling of bone meal. Infected bone meal was destroyed by deep burial in lime.

A campaign was introduced in the early part of the year for the immunisation of children between the ages of one and fifteen against diphtheria.

The material used was Alum precipitated toxoid and two injections were given with four weeks interval between. The inoculations were performed at no cost to the parents at 'centres' by local medical practitioners. The table following shows the response during the year 1941.

		Ages 1 - 5			Ages 5 - 15		
		Immunised	Pop:	%	Immunised	Pop:	%
Tenterden Borough	To 30.9.41	101)	150	67.33	326)	374	87.16
	1.10.41 to 31.12.41	-)			-)		
Cranbrook Rural District	To 30.9.41	123)	575	34.78	696)	1,436	74.23
	1.10.41 to 31.12.41	77)			370)		
Maidstone Rural District	To 30.9.41	223)	717	52.16	1,037)	1,791	82.02
	1.10.41 to 31.12.41	151)			432)		
Tenterden Rural District	To 30.9.41	139)	334	43.41	564)	834	74.58
	1.10.41 to 31.12.41	6)			58)		

It should be noted that this table includes only those children whose immunisation had been completed. In addition there were at least:-

	Under 5	Over 5
Tenterden Borough.	11	41
Cranbrook R.D.	50	103
Maidstone R.D.	16	115
Tenterden R.D.	30	60

- continued -

INFECTIOUS DISEASE: continued.

who had had the first inoculation only. These will come into the figures for the following year, when completed. It will be seen the minimum (three quarters immunised) desired for protection was attained for the age group 5 - 15 years; but not for the under 5 years group, for whom it is more important, since the disease is more fatal at those ages. Further efforts are being made to improve the relative degree of immunisation among the child population.

TUBERCULOSIS

	NEW CASES					DEATHS					RECOVERED		
	Pulmon-ary		Non-Pulmon-ary		Total	Pulmon-ary		Non-Pulmon-ary		Total			
	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F		P	NP	T
Tenterden Borough	-	1	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1
Cranbrook R.D.	5	3	2	2	12	1	2	-	-	3	-	2	2
Maidstone R.D.	8	6	2	1	17	7	1	-	-	8	1	1	2
Tenterden R.D.	4	3	1	3	11	-	2	-	1	3	-	-	-
Totals	17	13	5	7	42	8	6	-	1	15	1	4	5

Non-Civilian cases:- Tenterden Borough - 1 pulmonary.
 Cranbrook R.D. - 1 non-pulmonary.
 Maidstone R.D. - 1 pulmonary.
 Tenterden R.D. - 2 pulmonary.

The figures for the civilians for the two previous years were:-

	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Total
1939	36	12	48
1940	22	7	29

The increase this year to 42 is shown mainly in females suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis in the Cranbrook and Maidstone Rural Districts.

EVACUATION.

The number of evacuees in the area has been steadily decreasing since 1940.

A small percentage need examination from time to time owing to psychological difficulties or nocturnal enuresis.

CIVIL DEFENCE.

The A.R.P. areas (Tenterden and Cranbrook Joint and Maidstone Rural) are well covered by First Aid Points, official and unofficial, for the treatment of Air Raid casualties. All the personnel are on a Voluntary basis, and in many cases the equipment of the unofficial points has been brought by local effort up to the standard of that of First Aid Posts.

Besides Voluntary Aid Houses and Voluntary Gas Cleansing Houses in both areas, the Tenterden and Cranbrook area is served by two heavy and one light unit with equipment and staff and the Maidstone Rural area by one heavy mobile unit. The latter has carried out exercises in conjunction with the other First Aid services in all the parishes of the district.

INSPECTION BY SANITARY INSPECTORS

	Tenterden Borough			Cranbrook R.D.			Maidstone R.D.			Tenterden R.D.		
	Numbers	Visits	Defects	Numbers	Visits	Defects	Numbers	Visits	Defects	Numbers	Visits	Defects
Bakehouses	3	12	-	18	26	2	14	21	3	9	11	1
Dairies	33	140	2	122	402	17	106	117	12	114	118	22
Slaughter-houses-												
Registered	2	-	-	-	-	-	15)			-	-	-
Licenced	-	-	-	12	436	9	4)	131	6	5	5	-
Other Food Pre-	1	4	-	37	20	1	20	26	3	-	-	-
paring Places												
Factories	2	8	-)				106	10	1	1)		-
Workshops and)	85	12	3)	21	
Work places.	-	-	-)				-	-	-	2)		-
										6)		

Nuisances and Defects remedied (other than above)

	Numbers.			
	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
Overcrowding	1	2	11	-
Keeping of Animals	-	-	12	2
Hop-pickers Camp	6	12	15	6
Sanitary Accommodation -				
insufficient	-	-	20	2
defective	2	8	30	4
Drainage - reconstructed	-	10	22	5
- repaired	2	11	24	14
- cleansed	2	71	29	8
Cesspools - abolished	-	1	10	-
- repaired	4	12	12	10
- offensive accumulations	-	2	6	-
Refuse Receptacles	-	21	8	-
Tents, Vans and Sheds	1	2	2	2
Yard Paving	-	1	12	4
Dampness	1	5	14	26
Roofs & Rainwater Pipes	-	9	14	30
Floors	1	7	8	4
Walls and Ceilings	-	7	20	22
Windows & Ventilation	-	4	6	32
Baths, Lavatory Basins & Sinks	-	4	12	64
Water Supplies	7	26	4	94
Miscellaneous	6	20	-	6

8.

FOOD CONDEMNED DURING THE YEAR

Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R. D.
cwts. qts. lbs.	Tons cwts. qts. lbs.	cwts. qts. lbs.	cwts. qts lbs
9 - 0 - 0	1 - 17 - 2 - 11	8 - 4 - 11	4 - 0 - 0

TOTAL INSPECTIONS BY THE SANITARY INSPECTORS.

264	2,632	1,356	1,308
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Work in connection with the War continues to take up a considerable proportion of the Sanitary Inspectors' time. In one case, half the Inspector's time is allocated to Civil Defence duties.
